

Forest Products from a Log

Using the latest science and technology the forest product industry is able to utilize more of a log than in the past. Advancements in engineered wood products, papermaking pulp production, efficient packaging design, and recycling have enabled the industry to meet the world's demand for forest products in the most sustainable manner possible. Today's sawmills utilize the latest technology. Computers help sawmill operators get the most of each log allowing them to use fewer trees to meet our needs.

A. Bark

Traditionally the tree's bark was used for fuel, medicines, spices, basket making, clothing, cloth, cordage, canoe building, shelters, cork, tannery products, natural dyes, building siding, and more. Many of these uses still exist today. The bark on trees used in papermaking needs to be completely removed. This process is called debarking.

B. Slabs

Slabs are the round sides of the log. Traditionally, European settlers utilized these pieces when constructing their homes. Today most slabs are chipped and turned to pulp for paper making, used for firewood, or ground to make landscape mulch.

C. The Outer Log

Boards cut from this area of the log have few or no knots. These boards can be used to make high quality lumber that is used in the production of premium wood products such as furniture. Boards milled from the outer portion of the log can be anywhere from one to three inches thick.

D. The Center Log

This portion of the log contains more knots. Knots are formed as new growth surrounds branches, living or dead. This is why pruning trees properly is important. Heavy beams and planks are milled from the center of the log. One use of the heavy beams is for railroad ties.

